

Surfing Sessions

Adventure Activity Standards (AAS)

for
Organisations, Guides & Leaders
Conducting Adventurous
Activities for Participants
(Commercial or Non-Commercial)



Government of South Australia
Office for Recreation and Sport



Introduction to AAS

The South Australian Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) have been developed to assist organisations, guides and leaders to plan and undertake outdoor adventure activities with dependent participants. This document should be used as part of your organisation's risk management program.

Participants undertaking adventure activities may already have a degree of skill and experience in a particular adventure activity, and as such may be less dependent upon the group leader for guidance and instruction. In these situations, the AAS should be adapted to reflect the experience of group members and the particular situation of the adventure activity.

Regardless of the extent to which the AAS is adopted, each organisation, guide and leader has a duty of care to its participants to have completed a risk analysis of the activity, and developed a risk management approach to address potential and unexpected situations.

The AAS have been prepared with the involvement of a wide cross-section of South Australia's and Victoria's outdoor industry, and reflects minimal acceptable standards of behavior expected when planning and undertaking outdoor adventure activities with inexperienced and dependent participants.

Acknowledgement

In the development and implementation of AAS in South Australia, Recreation SA acknowledges the work of the Outdoor Recreation Centre Inc. in initiating, coordinating and developing AAS through many outdoor recreation groups within Victoria.

These AAS can now be adapted nationally across a number of outdoor adventure activities, and Recreation SA has reviewed and amended the content, in consultation with South Australian outdoor industry representatives, to reflect South Australia's legal, government, environmental, social, education and industry conditions.

The implementation of the AAS in South Australia is recognition of the State's commitment to national minimum industry standards for outdoor adventure activities.

Important disclaimer

The information contained in this publication has been gathered through widespread industry consultation. All reasonable attempts have been made to ensure that it is accurate, relevant and current at the date of publication. Nevertheless, the Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) are only advisory and general in nature and should not be relied upon to meet individual or specific requirements. They are recommendations for voluntary application to adventure activity providers and participants. They are not binding on any person or organisation and have no legal force.

The AAS will not cover each and every circumstance of an adventure activity. Nor can they, when adhered to, entirely eliminate the risk or possibility of loss or injury. Consequently they should be used as a guide only. Whenever using the information contained in this publication or any AAS, all adventure activity providers should carefully evaluate the specific requirements of the intended adventure activity and the persons participating in it. If necessary, advice should be obtained from a suitably experienced and qualified professional person.

This publication and the information and the AAS it contains are made available on the express condition that the Government of South Australia (Office for Recreation and Sport) and Recreation SA, together with the authors, consultants and advisors who have assisted in compiling and drafting this publication and the AAS are not rendering professional advice to any person or organisation and make no warranties with respect thereto and to the maximum extent permitted by law disclaim all liability and responsibility for any direct or indirect loss, damage or liability which may be suffered or incurred by any person as a consequence of reliance upon anything contained in or omitted from this publication.

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- Operation Flinders
- Bushwalking Leadership SA
- Wilderness Escape Outdoor Adventures
- Venture Corporate Recharge
- BCS Adventure Services
- Scouts SA
- The Association for Horsemanship Safety and Education
- Rock Solid Adventure
- With Good Company
- TAFE SA, Adelaide North

Managed by the AAS Steering Committee representing:

- Department of Education and Children's Services
- Department for Environment and Heritage
- Department for Families and Communities—Office for Youth
- Department for Families and Communities—Youth Adventure and Recreation Service
- Office for Recreation and Sport
- Recreation SA
- TAFE SA, Adelaide North
- Wilderness Escape Outdoor Adventures
- Venture Corporate Recharge
- South Australian Rock Climbing Education Association (SAREA)

Content provided by and endorsed by:

- Surfing South Australia
- Victor Harbor DECS Aquatics
- Wilderness Escape Outdoor Adventures
- Venture Corporate Recharge

Adventure Activity Standards: why have standards?

AAS are voluntary guidelines for undertaking adventure activities in a manner designed to promote:

1. **Safety** for both participants and providers
2. **Information** for providers against legal liability claims and criminal penalties
3. **Assistance** in obtaining insurance cover.

These AAS are **not** statutory standards imposed by law.

Basis of legal liability

Legal liability for personal injuries or property damage is primarily governed by the law of:

1. Contract
2. Negligence.

Although provisions of statutes such as the *Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)* and the *Recreational Services (Limitation of Liability) Act 2002* are also relevant.

Claims in contract

For there to be a claim in contract there must be a legally enforceable agreement (i.e. a contract) between the person who has suffered injury or loss and the provider against whom the claim is being made. For example, there is a contract between a provider and a client, where the provider agrees to provide services for payment. The contract can be in writing or oral, or both. The claim in contract can only be made by one party to the contract against the other party, unlike a claim in negligence, which is not so limited.

Apart from the express terms of the contract, the law will usually imply certain terms into a contract that require a service provider to do a number of things when providing that service. Those implied terms might include a requirement to provide competent guides and instruction, safe equipment, and a general requirement to exercise the degree of reasonable skill and care which is to be expected of a competent provider. Some of these terms will be implied by sections of the *Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)* and the *Recreational Services (Limitation of Liability) Act 2002*.

If injury or damage occurs because the provider did not exercise reasonable care in the provision of the service, a Court can find there was a breach of the contract entitling a party to claim compensation (damages) for the loss or injury suffered.

Claims in negligence

Over recent years the law of negligence has undergone substantial legislative change in South Australia. These changes are set out in the *Civil Liability Act 1936 (SA)*.

The essential elements of a claim in negligence are:

1. a duty of care being owed by the provider to take reasonable measures for the safety of their clients/participants

2. a breach of this duty of care
3. the breach of the duty of care being a cause of the harm suffered by the participant.

A successful claim in negligence against a provider will result in an award of damages against that provider to compensate for the loss or injury thereby suffered.

Although the law does not automatically impose a duty of care, it is likely such a duty will be imposed when one party (the provider) assumes responsibility for another in the provision of adventure activities.

The duty of care is a legal requirement imposed by the courts on a provider to take reasonable care to protect a client or participant from foreseeable harm or loss.

If a claim is made and a court finds that a duty of care is owed, the court must then decide what is the appropriate level or standard of that duty of care, to determine if the provider has acted reasonably or alternatively has breached the duty of care. The standard of care is determined by all the relevant circumstances and the particular facts of each case. A court will have regard to the experience of the providers and the clients, the conditions at the time, and ultimately may seek the guidance from experts in the field. A court will find that the standard of care has not been met, (i.e. there has been a breach of the duty of care) if the evidence, on the balance of probabilities, establishes that the provider has not acted reasonably in the circumstances. If that conduct has caused loss and damage the provider will be liable to pay damages to compensate the party who has been injured or has suffered a loss.

For example, in an outdoor recreation activity some participants could find themselves in a situation suited to more advanced participants. There may be persons in the group who have been lead to believe by the provider that a certain skill level was not required and enrolled to join a group mis-described as being for 'beginners'.

If an accident occurred due to their inexperience, and these 'novice' participants were injured, it is possible that a legal action to recover damages might be based as follows:

- in the law of contract, against the provider, if it can be demonstrated that the provider incorrectly described the group as being for 'beginners'
- in the law of negligence, against the leader and guide, as well as the provider because of a failure to adequately instruct, advise and perhaps supervise the group.

The duty of care of the provider is higher than that placed on the ordinary citizen because the provider has agreed to provide services for a reward or assumed a responsibility of care for others, e.g. by holding him/herself out as experts or specialists who have agreed to take participants into potentially dangerous or remote situations.

Whilst not an exclusive list the following is a guide to the standards that should be addressed by any provider, guide, instructor, teacher or staff member:

- ensure the activity is appropriate for the skills and experience of the intended participants
- ensure the intended activity is appropriate given the known, expected and forecast conditions

- provide adequate staff/leader supervision
- provide competent and appropriately trained staff/leaders
- provide safe and properly functioning and adjusted equipment
- provide reasonable food and safe shelter (if relevant to the activity)
- provide reasonable guidance, instruction and direction to participants
- depending on the activity, have an adequate knowledge of the area in which it is to take place and be able to provide reasonable first aid, emergency backup and rescue.

The law will require the provider to protect participants from known hazards, but also from those risks that could arise (that is, those that the provider, instructor, teacher or staff member guide should reasonably have foreseen) against which reasonable preventative measures could be taken.

In these circumstances, in order to limit potential for legal liability and to minimise the risk of injury, each organisation needs to implement risk and safety management processes, which have identified foreseeable risks and put in place measures to control such hazards. For the same reasons, all providers, leaders or guides ought, as a minimum, to have completed appropriate first aid and activity specific training.

This is particularly so where the activity is a specialised one. In these circumstances, as a participant will be seen as relying on the expertise of the provider, leader or guide, a high duty of care will be imposed because they will be considered as having a responsibility for the control, guidance and protection of the participant.

Defences against claims by participants

No Negligence

The most obvious defence to a claim in negligence is for the operator to establish that he/she acted with all reasonable care in the circumstances: that is, was not negligent.

In attempting to do so the following questions must be considered:

- was the risk of harm foreseeable?
- was the risk not insignificant?
- would a reasonable operator have taken additional precautions that would have prevented the harm?

In determining whether a reasonable operator would have taken additional precautions a court will consider the following (amongst other relevant things):

- the probability that harm would occur if care were not taken
- the likely seriousness of the harm
- the burden of taking precautions to avoid the risk of harm
- the social utility of the activity that creates the risk of harm.

Voluntary Assumption of Risk

If it can be proved, on the balance of probabilities, that a participant was fully aware of and freely accepted the risk of suffering injury in an activity then this will be a defence to a claim in negligence. It will not be a defence, however, if the injury was caused by the inexperience or incompetence of the provider, defective equipment, inadequate supervision or instruction as it is highly unlikely that any participant would have consented to accept such risks.

If the risk of harm was an obvious one then there is a rebuttable presumption that the person who suffered the harm was aware of the risk.

Duty to Warn

A person who owes a duty of care to another person to give a warning, or other information in respect of a risk, satisfies that duty if reasonable care is taken to give that warning, or other information. This is potentially very important in the context of an Adventure Activity where it may be prudent for the provider to give all participants printed instructions and warnings (where appropriate) and obtain signed acknowledgements.

However, section 38 of the *Civil Liability Act 1936 (SA)* prescribes that there is no duty to warn of an 'obvious risk', or if there is an applicable code of practice in force under the *Recreational Services (Limitation of Liability) Act 2002*. Further to this, the section does not apply if the plaintiff has requested advice or information about the risk from the defendant or if the defendant is required to warn the plaintiff of the risk either by law or pursuant to the code in force under the *Recreational Services (Limitation of Liability) Act 2002*.

Contributory Negligence

If the accident was caused or contributed to by lack of reasonable care on the part of the participant then this will be a partial defence, according to the apportionment of responsibility made by the court between the provider and the participant. In cases of extreme acts of negligence by the participant, contributory negligence can be very high (e.g. 80–90%) and sometimes a complete defence.

Inherent Risks

A person is not liable in negligence for harm suffered by another person as a result of an inherent risk. An inherent risk is a risk of something occurring that cannot be avoided by the exercise of reasonable care.

Waiver to Sue/Exclusion of Liability Agreements

Amendments to the *Recreational Services (Limitation of Liability) Act 2002*, and the *Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)* enables providers of 'recreational services' to modify or exclude a duty of care owed to a consumer by the use of a waiver or limitation of liability. This will only apply where there is no registered code in relation to the recreational service. The amendment will only apply until 1 August 2007, after which time the only manner in which liability will be able to be modified with respect to a recreational service will be in accordance with a registered code.

Good Samaritans, Volunteers, Apologies

Good Samaritans

Under the *Civil Liability Act 1936 (SA)* (as amended) an individual who provides assistance, advice or care to another person in an emergency, where there is no expectation of payment by money or other means, will not be able to be sued for any injury or harm he/she causes if acting in good faith without recklessness (provided the good Samaritan's ability was not significantly impaired by alcohol or drugs).

Volunteers

Pursuant to the *Volunteers Protection Act 2001 (SA)* volunteers are protected from liability for injury to another when they are acting in good faith and without recklessness in the course of carrying out community work for a community organisation. This immunity does not operate if the volunteer's ability to carry out the work properly was impaired by drugs or the volunteer was acting outside the scope of activities authorised by the community organisation or contrary to instructions given by the community organisation.

Expressions of Regret

The *Civil Liability Act 1936 (SA)* provides that no admission of liability or fault is to be inferred from the fact that a person expressed regret in respect of the incident relating to the injury.

Limitation on claims for personal injury damages

Pursuant to the *Civil Liability Act 1936* (as amended) an injured person cannot obtain damages for pain and suffering unless the injured person's ability to lead a normal life was significantly impaired by the injury for a period of at least seven days or medical expenses of at least the prescribed minimum have been reasonably incurred in connection with the injury. The assessment of pain and suffering is assigned a scale value on a scale running from zero to sixty, sixty being the most severe form of injury.

The Act also imposes a cap on damages for pain and suffering of a maximum of \$241,500 (indexed annually) together with other limitations in respect of damages for mental harm, and claims for both past and future economic loss.

Applying the Adventure Activity Standards

Having suitable risk management programs and strategies in place, and ensuring the AAS are met, will minimise the likelihood of injury or loss. Evidence of compliance with such programs and the AAS may also assist in the legal defence of claims and in helping to establish that a provider and its leaders have acted reasonably in the circumstances (i.e. were not negligent). It is also likely such programs will assist providers in obtaining more favourable insurance arrangements.

Disclaimer

The above comments on legal liability in Contract and Negligence and defences and limitations thereto, including recent legislative changes, do not purport to be a complete and accurate description of the law on these topics. The State Government of South Australia (Office for Recreation and Sport) and Recreation SA, its servants and agents are not by these comments providing legal advice to any person, company or organisation and make no warranties with respect thereto and to the maximum extent permitted by law disclaim all liability and responsibility for any direct or indirect loss, damage or liability which may be suffered or incurred by any person, company or organisation as a consequence of or in reliance upon anything contained in, implied by, or admitted in this document.

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Activity description

The Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) for surfing are written for the benefit of organisations looking to undertake group surfing sessions (surfboard or body board) for beginner to intermediate level.

AAS hold equal relevance to both commercial and non-commercial sessions and describe minimum reasonable practices for both single experience sessions (come and try groups) and development type programs (school groups).

Definition of terms

Activity provider: The provider of the activity. This may refer to an organisation (Commercial or non-commercial) and/or a session supervisor (commercial or non-commercial).

Organisation: A group of persons organised for a particular purpose and assuming the role of providing a surfing activity (activity provider) being commercial (for profit) or non-commercial (not for profit/community group).

Participant: A person whose welfare is the responsibility of an assistant, session supervisor or instructor. (NOLRS 'Client')

Session coordinator: AAS refers to a session coordinator as the session supervisor is in charge of the session (guide or instructor, commercial or not).

Session supervisor: Session supervisor refers to surfing instructor and surfing guide.

Summary of abbreviations

| | |
|-------|---|
| AAS | Adventure Activity Standards |
| DEST | Department of Education, Science and Training |
| NTIS | National Training Information Service |
| NOLRS | National Outdoor Leaders Registration Scheme |
| ITAB | Industry Training Advisory Board |
| SRTA | Sport and Recreation Training Australia |
| Cth | Commonwealth |

1 Planning

Before setting out, the planning section of the activity standards contains the documented administrative aspects of AAS. It is here you will find the requirements that must be completed before undertaking any activity.

1.1 Activity Plan for Recreational Surfing

Organisations must carefully select venues and plan activities that meet the objectives of the session. To do this, the following considerations are to be included:

- objectives of the session (Desired outcomes)
- supervision to participant ratio (See 2.6)

- qualifications and experience of available supervision
- age, skill and experience of participants (including fitness) in surfing and swimming
- group size
- prevailing conditions and forecast conditions (waves, wind)
- potential hazards at venue (rips, submerged rocks, currents and tides)
- suitability of available equipment (boards, wetsuits, rescue)
- depth, conditions and temperature of water relative to participants' experience
- proximity to medical expertise
- suitability of available emergency communication equipment
- access and remoteness of venue
- land managers' requirements (access guidelines, registration, group numbers see 2.6, 2.7).

Due to the significant variation between South Australian beaches it is essential that the selected venue be appropriately researched.

When selecting the session supervisor(s) for a surfing session it is essential to consider that:

- the session supervisors have the required competency to conduct the session, effectively manage incidents and to satisfy the planned objectives (see 2.1)
- the selected session coordinator must be familiar with the specific beach being visited and be knowledgeable of the foreseeable variables.

1.2 Pre-session documentation

Documentation is often seen as a chore and not a minimum requirement. However, there are certain details which supervisors and the organisation must be aware of to maximise the safety of the group:

- emergency strategy (including details set out below in 1.4)
- participant's name, address and emergency contacts
- any medical conditions stated by participants which may be relevant to the activity and how they are best dealt with:
 - for example: asthma (details of management plan required), diabetes, epilepsy, fainting/dizziness, specific allergic reactions, blood conditions which may effect bleeding/clotting, recent or longstanding injuries (e.g. back, knee, ankle), disability, conditions effecting balance, current tetanus and/or other relevant medical conditions (e.g. heart condition, migraines, pregnancy) and medication
- after a clear pre-session briefing, participants 18 years and over must sign a document in relation to the following:
 - acknowledgement of inherent risks

- authorising any relevant emergency treatment by a medical officer if required
- particulars of swimming ability
- particulars of surfing experience
- acknowledgement as to whether additional buoyancy (a personal flotation device) is required
- a waiver to sue
- participants under the age of 18 must have the signature of a parent/guardian.

All documentation must be readily accessible (ideally on the beach) to the session coordinator in the event of an incident/emergency and all individual participants requirements must be appropriately accounted for throughout the session.

1.3 Risk assessment/checklist

The session coordinator must conduct a risk assessment of the venue prior to any session and document hazards, changes to expected conditions and how they should be reasonably dealt with.

As a minimum, a checklist must be documented before initiating any session to ensure that the following considerations are appropriately accounted for:

- wave height and direction are appropriate
- tide is appropriate for the location
- rips identified and accounted for
- wind direction and strength are appropriate for the planned session
- unexpected submerged rock or reef
- access and egress are clear in case of an emergency
- sand bars are safe and/or appropriately considered to minimise risk
- other users are appropriately accounted for.

Where any of the above is not as expected, appropriate strategies must be implemented.

It is recommended that the organisation or session coordinator keep the checklist as a record of the conditions.

1.4 Emergency strategy

An emergency strategy must be written to manage incidents and minimise their escalation.

Surf session coordinators and an appropriate external contact, either within the organisation or otherwise, must be fully aware of the emergency strategy and a summary must be provided as a component of the preliminary group briefing.

A copy of the documented emergency strategy must be kept with other session documentation (readily accessible to the session coordinator and a non-participating contact in the event of an incident/emergency).

The surf session coordinator must communicate with the relevant external contact at designated time/s where appropriate. Upon failure to do so the external contact must then notify the Police.

The emergency strategy for a surfing session must be specific to each venue and session and must contain:

- evacuation routes
- assembly points where appropriate
- contact details for key organisations (e.g. land manager, emergency services, police, ambulance) and how they are best contacted (mobile phone, satellite phone, radio)
- planned start and finish time of the session
- a strategy for maintaining supervision ratios should any changes to the planned session eventuate (adverse conditions, injured guide(s), participant(s) pull out of session).

1.5 Restrictions to participation

Operational restrictions to a surfing session include weather (electrical storm, excess winds), equipment, land manager/owner requirements, type of venue and restrictions dictated by environmental factors as advised by the land manager or otherwise.

Individual restrictions to a surfing session apply to participants deemed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription drugs which may affect performance and to participants who are unable or unwilling to follow instructions.

2 Responsibilities of session supervisors

This section includes all aspects of the activity plan that involve the surfing instructor and the surf guide(s). Specific competencies for various types of venue, levels of difficulty and basic expectations are covered.

2.1 Competencies

The current surf coaching/leadership accreditation recognised by Surfing Australia at State, national and international level is available through Surfing South Australia (State branch of Surfing Australia). Surfing Australia delivers a comprehensive and progressive range of coaching qualifications.

AAS consider the Surfing Australia Level One Coaching Award to be an appropriate qualification for leaders conducting introductory surf sessions. For further details contact the State Coaching Coordinator for South Australia, (08) 8384 1126 or <surfsa@chariot.net.au>.

Other training providers may include community organisations, TAFE colleges, universities and registered training organisations (RTOs) for training guides and coaches of surfing sessions.

A surf session coordinator/guide or assistant must be confident of having satisfied a comprehensive process of skill acquisition and have experience which must be

appropriate for the session and at least equivalent to the Surfing Australia Level One award and/or that described by the following.

A statement of attainment for these units is not compulsory. However, the inclusion of this section is intended to provide a suitable benchmark describing the skills that a leader should have as described within the National Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package.

Surfing Guide (Basic)

The surfing guide is competent to conduct surfing sessions for beginner level participants independently in fine conditions, with small groups of up to 8 participants and to assist a surfing instructor in larger more complex sessions.

Surfing Australia consider this level of competence to be equivalent to their apprentice.

| Code | Unit name |
|------------|---|
| SRXFAD001A | Provide first aid |
| SRXINU002A | Apply sport and recreation law |
| SRXOHS001B | Follow defined OHS policy and procedures |
| SRXRIK001A | Undertake risk analysis of activities |
| SRXEMR001A | Respond to emergency situations |
| SRXGRO001A | Facilitate a group |
| SRXGRO002A | Deal with conflict |
| SROOPS002B | Plan for minimal environmental impact |
| SROOPS003B | Apply weather information |
| SROODR002A | Plan outdoor recreation activities |
| SROODR005A | Guide outdoor recreation sessions |
| SROSRF003B | Perform Intermediate level surfing manoeuvres |
| SROSRF004B | Perform a simple rescue in moderate surf conditions |
| SROSRF007A | Guide surfing sessions |

Surfing Instructor (Basic to Intermediate)

The surfing instructor is the coordinator of larger surfing sessions for basic and intermediate participants and for sessions at less familiar beaches. This level is equivalent to a Surfing Australia level one surf instructor.

The above units for Surf Guide, plus:

| Code | Unit name |
|------------|---|
| SRXEMR002A | Coordinate emergency response |
| SRXGRO003A | Provide leadership to groups |
| SROODR003A | Plan outdoor recreation activities advanced |
| BSZ404A | Train Small Groups |
| SROSRF009A | Instruct basic to intermediate surfing skills |

Details of these units can be accessed free by logging on to the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), National Training Information Service website at <www.ntis.gov.au/>.

2.2 First aid

The coordinator of any surf session must have a current and recognised Senior First Aid Certificate and have a current SLSA Surf Bronze Medallion (Community) qualification or equivalent.

Decisions on the level of first aid should be based upon the risk assessment and emergency strategy for the activity. Leaders and guides should have the appropriate first aid skills commensurate with the planned activity, the skills of the group and the location of the activity, including remote areas. A comprehensive first aid kit appropriate to the level of first aid training must be accessible at all times. Remote areas may require more advanced first aid skills such as Wilderness First Aid where leader and guides recognise, prevent and treat many illnesses and injuries prevalent in wilderness and remote locations.

The following table provides an overview of equivalent first aid training with South Australian providers St John Ambulance and Australia Red Cross.

Level 1: Basic First Aid (Resuscitation) involves basic skills and knowledge in order to recognise and provide immediate first aid for a range of common illnesses and injuries and minimise the severity of injury or sudden illness.

Leaders and guides with Basic First Aid should be able to:

- perform CPR (resuscitation)
- manage breathing emergencies: expired air resuscitation (EAR)
- control bleeding, wounds and bandaging
- manage extremes of heat and cold
- manage injuries to bones, joints and muscles
- manage poisoning, bites and stings

Level 2: Intermediate or Senior First Aid involves skills and knowledge to recognise and provide immediate first aid for a range of common illnesses and injuries and minimise the severity of injury or sudden illness.

Leaders and guides with Intermediate or Senior First Aid should be able to:

- define the principles of first aid
- demonstrate knowledge of basic human anatomy
- recognise and manage both a conscious and an unconscious casualty
- perform effective CPR and expired air resuscitation (EAR)
- identify a range of common illnesses and injuries
- control bleeding and care for various types of wounds
- recognise and manage injuries to bone or soft tissue

- recognise and manage medical conditions that may need emergency care, including heart attack, stroke, asthma, diabetes and epilepsy
- use practical first aid skills using prepared and improvised materials
- demonstrate knowledge of first aid management for a range of common illnesses and injuries.

2.3 Specific responsibilities of the session coordinator

The following are the responsibilities of a session coordinator. Individual tasks may be delegated but the responsibility remains with the session coordinator.

Whenever conducting a surf session it is the session coordinators responsibility to ensure that the level of knowledge, ability, skill and equipment of each participant is appropriate for the level of difficulty and complexity of the session and to receive acknowledgement from all participants that he/she has the role of leading the group and:

- research and plan for likely hazards/incidents/emergencies
- ensure that minimal environmental impact message is conveyed and adhered to
- confirm that the session plan is appropriate for the group's experience/capabilities and is matched to the session objectives.
- ensure that pre-activity documentation is signed (see 1.2)
- structure the session to allow rest when necessary
- ensure a full pre session briefing is carried out and understood by all supervisors and participants (See 2.5)
- ensure a practice session is conducted, skills are imparted and ongoing coaching of technical skills occurs where necessary
- conduct pre-session risk assessment (1.3)
- check first aid kit and communication equipment prior to session
- confirm head count before, regularly during and immediately following the session
- ensure that supervision ratios are maintained so that participants are supervised at all times
- appropriately designate responsibility to surf guide(s) acting as assistants
- appoint external contacts to notify police if not contacted by designated times
- notify external contacts of safe return/completion
- check condition of all group equipment on return
- ensure that any incidents are documented and reported
- ensure that participants are appropriately protected from the environment (sunscreen, wetsuit, rash vests/sun, cold wind).

2.4 Assistant to the session coordinator

When sessions are conducted with more than one session supervisor, the session coordinator must be in charge of the entire session. This coordinator must be a surfing instructor and all assistants must be competent surf guides.

All surf guides in this role must support and assist the session coordinator according to the session plan and manage any incident or emergency according to the emergency strategy if the coordinator becomes injured or incapacitated. (See 2.6 and 2.7).

2.5 Communication and authority

As for all outdoor activities involving group participation, all participants and session supervisors must use agreed and understood communication. It is therefore essential that this be devised before the session and agreed as a component of the pre-session briefing.

The pre-session briefing may be delivered differently according to organisational preference and, where relevant, the length and complexity of a session but must include and is not limited to each and every element of the following:

- Introduction of session coordinator, guide(s) and objectives (explaining bright tops for all supervisors)
- Basic information about the venue, location, conditions
- Strategies for environmental conservation including flora, fauna and rubbish removal
- The nature of the activity, inherent risks, emergency strategy, group conduct and communication requirements
- explanation of surfing safely and surf etiquette
- explanation of designated areas (flags, banners)
- explanation of signals (hand, whistle)
- explanation of what to do when caught in a rip
- emergency response
- expected conduct of participants
- equipment and clothing including explanation of equipment use and fit
 - if a personal flotation device (PFD) is provided:
 - state features of PFD
 - demonstrate proper fit of PFD
 - check participants' PFDs
 - instruct participant(s) to wear PFD fastened at all times
 - if helmets are deemed necessary:
 - state features of helmet
 - demonstrate proper fit of helmet
 - check participants' helmets

- instruct participants to wear helmet fastened at all times
 - boards and body boards:
 - demonstrate fitting of leashes
 - instruct participants to wear leashes at all times in water
- confirm participants clothing, hair and jewellery are appropriate for the planned session
- confirm participants are free of the effects of alcohol/drugs
- confirm that participants have understood the pre-session briefing
- verbal health check for participants to voice concerns about their capabilities
- explanation of required documentation including completion and signing of waiver (Section 1.2).

2.6 Ratios of supervisors to participants

Variables such as weather, venue (remoteness, conditions, difficulty) and the group (experience, competence, fitness and available equipment) will affect the supervision ratios. So there are clearly situations where your judgment will dictate the requirement for smaller numbers of participants per supervisor. Land managers may also suggest ratios that differ from AAS and where these are within AAS they must be regarded as minimum standards.

Regardless of these factors:

- the ratio of supervision (surfing instructor and guide(s)) to dependant participant) must never exceed 1:8
- where there are two or more guide(s) for a group, the designated coordinator of the session must be competent to the level of surfing instructor (see 2.1) and assistants must be competent, at least, to the level of surfing guide (see 2.1)
- where conditions are not considered to be 'optimal', there must always be a minimum of two session supervisors.

2.7 Group size

For the safety of the group and consideration of other beach users, the maximum group size for a surfing session is 24 (participants).

Any group of more than 24 participants must be either split and each resultant group independently adhere to AAS or be conducted with sufficient additional resource consideration (i.e an extra surfer assistant over viewing the whole beach) for managing a large group.

It is worth noting the intent of this section is that one competent and experienced surfing instructor can safely supervise up to 24 participants with the help of two surfing guide(s). A larger group will require an additional surfing instructor and if the group is not split then additional consideration will be required to ensure clear communication and group management.

3 Equipment

Equipment requirements vary with the objectives of the session and the environmental conditions likely to be endured. When planning equipment requirements for a surfing session it is important to plan ahead as much as possible for all eventualities taking into account any appropriate information including forecast weather conditions.

3.1 Equipment for the group

The following equipment must be readily accessible to the session coordinator throughout any surfing session involving groups:

- first aid kit
- a rescue tube and/or an appropriate board
- an appropriate communication device (mobile phone, radio) to immediately seek assistance in the event of an accident/incident
- shelter, water and food.

3.2 Equipment for the participants

The following equipment requirements apply to all participants:

- any personal medication must be readily accessible to the participant and/or session coordinator who must understand the requirement
- all participants must wear wetsuits (to provide warmth, padding, buoyancy, sun protection) or equivalent clothing appropriate to the conditions
- leashes (leg or wrist as appropriate) must be used
- all boards used for beginner sessions must have been supplied as a 'soft board', and must **not** be glass fibre or wood
- consideration must be given to the requirement for helmets
- personal flotation devices (PFDs) should be available for children and for adults with limited swimming ability.

3.3 Equipment used by the session supervisors

All surf session supervisor(s) must wear brightly coloured vests or other easily identifiable clothing and must have a whistle on their person to communicate with the group.

3.4 Equipment condition, maintenance and storage

All equipment used in surfing activities must be:

- used, maintained and stored according to manufacturers' specifications where applicable
- checked before and after each session
- provided in a clean and serviceable condition.

4 Environment and conduct

The leader, guide and organising body should be satisfied that participants are aware of their responsibilities (as members of the group) to ensure areas of scenic or recreational significance, special scientific or archaeological sites, and the natural environment are respected, and that the requirements of land managers are adhered to. The following represents acceptable conduct for the long-term sustainability of both the activity and the environment:

1. use only established access roads, pathways and parking areas to access surf beaches
2. undertake some basic education in coastal issues and where possible assist land managers in quickly identifying and eliminating problematic issues
3. ensure that participants do not disturb the flora and fauna of dune areas
4. always be friendly and civil to other coastal users, and always take the initiative in avoiding any potentially dangerous situations involving your group and the general public.

Further to this, the following strategies, which effectively minimise disturbance to natural and cultural values, represent acceptable conduct for the long-term sustainability of both the activity and the environment.

Waste

Rubbish: It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that no rubbish or introduced matter is left as a result of the group's activity in an area. This particularly applies to all food or drink packaging, food scraps and activity equipment. Leaders should plan to carry rubbish receptacles sufficient to enable all group-generated rubbish to be removed from the area. Where practicable, leaders should encourage participants to remove rubbish left by previous users.

Human waste: Faecal wastes are to be managed and disposed of in line with environmental regulations and land manager directions. This means that where toilet facilities are provided, these must be used. Where camping is permitted and no toilet facilities are available, toilet wastes must be buried at least 100 metres from a watercourse. If it is not feasible to bury wastes or to bury them at least 100 metres from a watercourse (e.g. narrow river valley, cliff areas), group leaders should plan to use equipment (e.g. 'poo-tubes') that enable the wastes to be removed and disposed of at a facility designed for this purpose.

Fire

Fire Bans: In most parks, the South Australian fire danger season usually extends from 1 November to 30 April, depending on seasonal conditions. No wood fires are permitted in parks during this time. Some parks have year round bans on wood fires. Open flames are banned in all parks on days of extreme fire danger. These are declared by the Country Fire Service (CFS). Parks may be closed to visitors on Total Fire Ban days. The onus is on the leader to check the fire ban status for the area they are visiting. Phone or visit the Department for Environment and Heritage or CFS Office for more details.

Camp Fires: Native vegetation within reserves is protected. In non-reserve areas, dead trees and fallen logs play an important role in the environment. In some parks, wood fires are prohibited or restricted. Gas or liquid fuel stoves are preferable. Where fires are permitted they should be:

- lit in existing fireplaces where possible or in a properly constructed fireplace or pit (minimum 30cm deep and a maximum of one metre wide) and returned as closely as practicable as it was
- must be clear of flammable vegetation for at least three metres around the fireplace or pit
- kept to a minimum size necessary for cooking, minimising disturbance to the surrounding area
- attended at all times
- extinguished with water
- avoided if fuel is scarce
- avoided if at all unnecessary or where doing so will not comply with the minimal impact approach.

Camping

- Camp at established campsites where possible
- Make campsites away from water resources (at least 20 metres from any stream) and allow animals undisturbed access
- Use floored tents with poles
- No trenches around tents
- Use toilet facilities where available
- Avoid using any soaps or detergents. If they must be used, use only biodegradable soaps and detergents. Dispose of washing water at least 50 metres from any water source
- Wash all soil from camping and personal equipment and vehicles before leaving home or moving between locations, in order to avoid transporting seeds or soil-borne pathogens such as phytosphthora.

5 Further information

Surfing South Australia as the governing body of the recreation and sport of surfing (recognised by State Government) conduct Australian Coaching Council registered Level 1 Surf Coaching Accreditations in South Australia. Surfing South Australia has three professional surf schools that can provide entry-level surfing and ocean safety education programs and instructor training with on the job placement opportunities in surf instruction.

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